DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 297 354 CS 211 423

AUTHOR Parkhurst, Howard
TITLE A Non-College Bound English Curriculum for Arenac Eastern High School.
PUB DATE [88]
NOTE 48p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Curriculum Design; *Curriculum Development; *Curriculum Guides; Curriculum Research; *English Curriculum; High Schools; *Noncollege Bound Students; Rural Schools; Rural Youth; Teacher Developed Materials

ABSTRACT

In response to a recognition of the differing needs and educational goals of non-college-bound and college-bound rural high school students, this guide presents the English curriculum for non-college-bound students (called "general English") adopted at Arenac Eastern High School (Michigan). Chapter 1 explains the background and purpose of the document; the research done prior to the construction of the new curriculum is reviewed in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 examines English curricula at four other Michigan high schools. Chapter 4 describes the adopted General English curriculum and the reasoning that went into its formulation, stating four criteria to be met: (1) the curriculum must be appropriate for students of high and low skill levels; (2) it must allow for students transferring to the college-bound program part-way through high school; (3) it must place great emphasis on motivation; and (4) it must include types of language skills useful and needed in everyday adult life. Four areas of concentration are identified for each year of high school, drawn from grammar and mechanics, literature and reading, composition, life skills, and media study. Chapter 5 outlines goals and objectives for each grade level of General English. Suggestions for research and a summary are contained in Chapter 6. An extended bibliography and a brief appendix conclude the guide. (SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED297354

A Non-College Bound English Curriculum for Arenac Eastern High School

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Howard Parkhurst
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

by

Howard Parkhurst

CS211423

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS i

CHAPTER

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE 1

II. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 5

III. AN EXAMINATION OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULA AT FOUR HIGH SCHOOLS 9

IV. A GENERAL ENGLISH CURRICULUM FOR ARENAC EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL 14

V. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 24

Ninth Grade General English 24

Tenth Grade General English 28

Eleventh Grade General English 32

Twelfth Grade General English 35

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH AND SUMMARY 38

BIBLIOGRAPHY 41

APPENDIX 45

Chapter I

Background and Purpose

Arenac Eastern High School is located in Twining, Michigan, a village of about 200 people located 55 miles north of Saginaw. The school district also serves the village of Turner (population 200) and the city of Omer (population 363) but is primarily rural in nature. The high school has approximately 200 students in grades nine through twelve.

Prior to the adoption of the curriculum set forth in Chapters IV and V below, the district required three years of English classes for graduation, with a fourth year expected of college bound students. The classes offered in fulfillment of this requirement were ninth grade English, tenth grade English, eleventh grade General English, American/English Literature, and twelfth grade College Preparatory English, the last two of which were intended primarily for college bound juniors and seniors.

The existence of general science and general mathematics courses for non-college bound freshmen at the school seemed to signify a recognition of the differing needs and educational goals of non-college bound and college bound students in those subject areas, as did the existence of special English classes for eleventh and twelfth graders. No attempt had ever been made, however, to address through the curriculum the differing needs

and goals of students in ninth and tenth grade English classes, nor had there been any attempt to structure the eleventh grade non-college bound class so that it built directly on what had been taught in the two previous years.

The result was that the school's English faculty became increasingly aware that the needs of neither the non-college bound nor the college bound students were being met in the area of communication skills. The ninth and tenth grade English teachers faced classrooms of students with wide ranges of abilities and degrees of motivation. Some of their students had severe difficulities in reading and writing, while others in the same classroom were far above grade level in capability. Some students, no matter what their capability, had no goals in mind and no motivation to succeed. Others had definite plans for jobs after high school, while still others intended to attend college. The teachers in these classes found that, even while attempting to individualize instruction, they did not have the time to remediate their slower students, challenge their more able students, and motivate the unmotivated at all levels of ability, especially when their students were at age levels where even the motivated often lack the self-direction needed to work on their own.

The eleventh grade college bound English teacher often found that many of his students were frustrated by the course, either because they had not been challenged enough in the past and felt burdened by the degree of reading and writing necessary to a course that studies primarily literature, or because

they had not attained concepts basic to the study of literature and the types of composition work needed in preparation for college. Their previous English classes, having tried to meet the needs of all students, had in actuality met the needs of few.

The result of this perception on the part of Arenac Eastern's English faculty was a proposal to the school district's superintendent that English in ninth and tenth grades be divided into non-college bound, or general, English and college bound English and that eleventh grade General English be constructed so that it would build on what had been taught in the two preceding years. The superintendent suggested adding a non-college bound English class for twelfth grade also. After a great deal of research and discussion, the new curriculum was completed and submitted to the board of education, which approved its implementation beginning with the 1986-1987 school year.

The purpose of this document, then, is to report the results of the research done preliminary to the construction of the new curriculum, and to describe and detail the finished product. The definition of curriculum as used in this paper shall be "the body of courses, and the content thereof, offered by the department of an educational institution." (4) Life skills, another term used in this document, refers to those language skills necessary for an adult to function independently in American society and includes such skills as writing letters and filling out job applications. These skills are also some-

times known as "survival skills" or "basic skills."

When defining terms, it should be pointed out, too, that "general" English here simply refers to "non-college bound" English and that this curriculum does not attempt to track students, whatever the merits or demerits of tracking may be. It is true that slower students will be more likely to take general English courses, just as they are general science or general mathematics, because they lack the skills or ability to keep up with the types of material or the pace in the classes intended for college bound students. Many highly able students at Arenac Eastern, though, are not educationally motivated and have no intention of seeking any type of formal schooling past high school. The intention behind this curriculum is to provide the terminal high school student with the skills he or she will need upon entry into adult life.

Too, the English faculty recognizes that students in ninth or tenth grade are not always certain of their goals after graduation and that even those who are certain may change their minds. Full-fledged tracking often makes it very difficult for students to switch tracks part way through high school if their goals change. Consequently, an attempt has been made to construct this non-college bound curriculum in such a way that such a switch can be made up until the senior year. The same concepts are taught in the general curriculum but not in such depth and not with the same materials. There also will be more emphasis placed on life skills in the general curriculum.

Chapter II

A Review of the Literature

A search through the card catalogs of a major university (Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan) and a state college (Saginaw Valley State College, University Center, Michigan), the last thirty-six years of the Education Index, the Current Index to Journals in Education, and the Encyclopedia of Educational Research yields very little research in the area of curriculum construction, one research study into the most appropriate subject matter for inclusion in a college English curriculum, and none that relates specifically to the construction of a high school curriculum in communication skills, let alone one intended for non-college bound high school students. The literature that does exist on this topic consists of the opinions and conclusions of university professors, high school teachers, and others who have obtained their ideas from personal experience, from research into the efficacy of various teaching methods and materials, or from research into aspects of the various communications skills themselves.

This does not mean to denigrate the views of these people. Their ideas represent informed opinions and beliefs on this topic and must be taken into account. However, it is also true that what appears in one article may often be contradicted in another article by an equally qualified writer. Then, too, some of the articles which appear in journals are by teachers with no more experience or education--and often less--than those involved in the construction of this curriculum. Added

to this is the fact that nearly all the material found in this search relates to English curricula in general, not to what is needed by or best for terminal high school students.

Thus the material covered in this review does not ordinarily apply specifically to non-college bound students but represents an overview of recent writing on aspects of the English curriculum in general. The material has been arranged according to the different types of subject matter ordinarily covered within English classes, beginning with grammar, about which Stephen Judy says in Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English, "The study of grammar has not been shown to improve performance in any other area of language study or performance." (22, p. 37) Algeo agrees that the study of grammar does not necessarily improve the ability to write or think, but does argue that grammar should be taught to change usage so students can make their speech and writing conform to standard English when they want or need to. He also says, "If teachers are to help students improve their writing, they need a common vocabulary they can both use to discuss the students' successes and failures--a language for talking about writing...It is difficult to teach the punctuation of restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses without discussing the grammar of those clauses." (1, p. 13) Stotsky finds that sentence-combining, an outgrowth of the influence of transformational grammar, has a positive effect on reading and composition abilities. (41)

Maxwell insists that the study of literature remains essential because it "...provides information about people--

including ourselves," "...helps us learn to value reading," and "...serves to show us models of how we express ourselves." (29, p. 4) Farrell argues for more study of topical works of literature, pointing out that many of the works now studied on a regular basis were first adopted in the 1800's, when they were contemporary. He also says, "Among school subjects, literature has unique powers by which to enrich individuals' existence and to transform their values: powers that enable individuals to enter fully into the lives of persons different from themselves...; powers that can transport them across barriers of time and space...; powers that can permit them to compare their attitudes, values, and experiences...with others..." (9, p. 30) Hipple, in Education in the 80's-English, edited by R. Baird Shuman, recommends continuing study of the classics, but also advocates more study of adolescent literature, as well as use of television shows and movies to teach such concepts as characterization and plot structure. (18)

Judy, in an article about composition this time, underscores the current importance placed on writing in the English curriculum by stating that since the Educational Testing Service first reported in 1974 the now famous decline in Scholastic Aptitude Test scores, "...just about everybody wants more done with the teaching of writing." He advocates a process approach to teaching composition, with this process made up of pre-writing, writing with in-process guidance, and post-writing. He also advocates peer editing. (23, p. 19) Judy, Shadlow, and Maxwell all argue that writing instruction should not be limited

to the English classroom, but that every teacher should be a writing teacher. (23, 38, 29)

Although writers on matters pertaining to the English curriculum generally seem to agree that the four primary communications skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing, not much seems to have been written about including reading instruction in the curriculum. What has been written can be either subsumed under literature or falls under the category of encouraging practice and independent reading. Judy recommends having a paperback reading center in each English classroom. (22) A "reading blitz" is indicated by Romano as encouraging independent reading. This practice is similar to Sustained Silent Reading, but with reading expected outside the classroom as well. (35) Flood and Lapp say that as both readers and listeners, students need help in figuring out a speaker's or writer's purpose, style, and organization. They also point out that students must sometimes be taught that there is a content knowledge that the writer is trying to convey. (11)

If little has been written about reading instruction as a part of the English curriculum, even less has been written about instruction in listening skills. Flood and Lapp say that students need to practice listening and speaking skills to develop reading-writing abilities because "...oral language is the base of the reading-writing process," and, as pointed out under reading, they need practice listening so that they can figure out a speaker's purpose, style, and organization.

(11, p. 85) Glatthorn points out that while listening can apparently be taught, little attempt has been made to establish any research-based sequence of listening skills. (13)

Again, while a wide variety of people recommend practice in developing speaking skills to suit a wide variety of occasions and purposes, few go beyond that. Glatthorn does say that oral language can be seen as having seven functions--instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, imaginative, informative, and heuristic--and that students need practice in developing all seven. (13)

Nearly any subject area that can be seen as a communication skill can find an advocate for its inclusion in a communications skills curriculum. Ruth insists that formal media study should be conducted in English classes to teach both techniques of production and critical viewing of television and movies. (36) Moral development should be considered a part of English instruction, according to Milner. (31) Wolfe recommends inclusion of critical thinking skills in the communications skills curriculum because he feels that thinking is a language art. (47)

Chapter III

An Examination of the English Curricula at Four High Schools

An examination of existing English curricula should also prove helpful to the construction of a new English program, especially in light of the dearth of literature that specifically relates to the topic, and consequently, visits were made

to four other high schools to talk to representatives of their English departments and to examine their course offerings.

The first of these, Standish-Sterling Central High School, is a Class C high school located in Standish, Michigan, about 45 miles north of Saginaw. Standish-Sterling Central places each student into one of three tracks: a "general" track for slow students, an intermediate or "regular" track for average students, and an advanced track for college bound students. All students are required to take three years of English for graduation, with a fourth year expected of college bound students. In ninth and tenth grades, students on all three tracks have one semester of grammar and one semester of literature. The students on the general and regular tracks cover the same material as those on the advanced track, but not as quickly or in as much depth. Students on the general track fulfill their eleventh grade English requirement by taking one semester of a course titled English III (largely grammar and punctuation) and one semester of speech. Regular track students must also take one semester of speech, but then may earn their final semester of language arts credit by taking one semester of elective credit, with electives including such courses as Business English, creative writing, American Literature, and yearbook. College bound students take one full year of American Literature and composition in eleventh grade. Reading improvement classes are offered outside the English department. Students find it very difficult to move from the non-college bound tracks to the college bound track.

Pinconning, the second school visited, is a Class B high school in Pinconning, Michigan, about 30 miles north of Saginaw. Pinconning divides its students into two tracks--a general, or non-college bound, track and a college prep track. Again, three years of English are required for graduation, with four years expected of college bound students. Students on both tracks cover primarily grammar and mechanics, with some literature, in ninth grade. In tenth grade, general track students cover the same type of material again, while college prep students take one semester of vocabulary development plus one of a literature elective. Available electives include mythology, English Literature, world literature, and science fiction. General track students may fulfill their remaining two semesters of English requirement in any two semesters of their junior and senior years. One of these two semesters must be American Literature. The second semester is an elective. Added to those electives listed above are creative writing, grammar, play production, drama, and advanced speech. College prep students must in their last two years take one semester of grammar, one expository writing class, and one semester of American Literature. The final semester is an elective, taken from the list above. All students must have the semester of American Literature, and the same text is used for both tracks. One semester of speech is required in addition to English, and must be taken by the end of the sophomore year. Students at Pinconning also find it very hard to change from the non-college bound track to the college bound track.

Bangor John Glenn High School, just outside Bay City, Michigan, is a Class B high school housing grades ten, eleven, and twelve. Students must successfully complete ninth grade English before taking tenth grade English, and those who have not done so must return to the junior high school to repeat that class. Students at the high school are divided into three tracks--basic, general, and academic--and must take two years of English before graduation, with a third year expected of those on the academic track. John Glenn requires the same basic content in courses for all three tracks, but with texts of differing difficulty. Thus, all tenth graders cover grammar as it relates to usage; paragraphing, essay writing, and research papers; speech; mythology; and world literature. However, as an example, the academic track uses Edith Hamilton's Mythology (New American Library, Inc., 1969); the general track uses Gods, Heroes, and Men of Ancient Greece by W. H. Rouse (New American Library, 1971); and the basic students use Myths and Folk Tales Around the World by Robert R. Potter and H. Alan Robinson (Globe, 1975). The theory behind this is that it reduces any stigma that may be attached to being in a lower track. All students must take mythology, so therefore, it must be expected that all students can learn mythology. Also, this helps to make it possible for students to change from the general track to the academic track should they eventually desire. In eleventh grade, all three groups have American Literature, but more emphasis is placed on business writing in the basic and general classes, while the academic students cover more grammar and essay

writing. Twelfth grade Academic English consists of British Literature and college composition preparation.

The last high school visited was Midland Dow, a Class A high school in Midland, Michigan. Midland Dow houses grades ten, eleven, and twelve and requires two years of English for graduation, with college bound seniors encouraged to take English during their senior year also. Except for three survey classes (Western Literature, American Literature, and European Literature), all classes are one semester in length and are elective. They have been divided into a communications series and an ideas series, however, and students are required to take one class from each series during each year. Classes have also been constructed to range from least academic difficulty to greatest academic difficulty. Examples of courses of least academic difficulty are remedial reading, paperbacks, and film study. Courses of the greatest academic difficulty include expository writing, advanced literature, and the survey classes. Some courses also have prerequisites which effectively exclude sophomores. For example, a student may not take independent reading until having completed contemporary literature, Western Literature, or advanced literature. Dow offers semester courses in a couple of areas not covered by the other curricula examined. A language study class covers primarily dialects and body language, and the international literature course studies the world's major religions. Outside of providing course offerings that fall within a wide range of difficulty, Dow has made no specific provisions for non-college bound or college bound students.

Chapter IV

A General English Curriculum for Arenac Eastern High School

Ideas and information gathered from the literature available on topics relating to English curricula and from visits to the four high schools discussed in Chapter III were presented at regular meetings of the English faculty of Arenac Eastern High School. From discussion of this material and presentation of their own views, these teachers formulated a curriculum they felt would meet the needs of non-college bound students at the school.

This curriculum had to meet several criteria that did not always appear to be a consideration at the other schools. First, it was not a curriculum just for slow or average students (though it had to meet their needs and provide for their success, too) because many non-college bound students are neither. Second, it had to provide those students who might decide to change their goals part-way through high school the opportunity to transfer to the college bound program. Third, a great deal of emphasis had to be placed on motivation because many of Arenac Eastern's non-college bound students are not educationally oriented enough to seek success in school for its own sake. Fourth, because these students are terminal high school students, a great deal of emphasis was placed on the types of language skills useful and/or needed in everyday adult life. In addition, a fourth year of non-college bound English, which none of the other schools specifically offered (though some had

electives that seniors were welcome to take), had to be added.

The faculty considered briefly some sort of partial elective format like those at Standish-Sterling Central and Pinconning, but discarded this as being impractical in a high school with three English teachers and 178 students. The faculty also felt that the additional work that one semester electives would cause during registration would make such a program unpopular with the administration.

The final plan that emerged from this discussion is a combination of the semester elective system and the system previously in use (which was simply that students registered for a year-long course called English, and what to teach under that title, and when, were entirely up to the teacher). In the new curriculum, four areas of concentration have been identified for each year of high school. Each area of concentration is meant to coincide roughly with one of the four marking periods contained in each year, though it is not the faculty's intent that a teacher be required to spend a full marking period on an area if it does not seem to be necessary, nor that he or she be limited to nine or ten weeks if a group seems to need more time on a subject.

In ninth and tenth grades, these four areas of concentration are grammar and mechanics, literature and reading, composition, and life skills. More and more people who are knowledgeable about education in communications skills are opposed to the formal study of grammar by all students, at least insofar as it is expected to aid composition. This view has been recog-

nized by the teachers involved in this project. It is their common experience, though, that as Algeo points out, punctuation and composition become much more difficult to teach when a student has little or no knowledge of grammar. (1) It is very difficult to explain to a student why a group of words is a sentence fragment if he or she does not know what a subject, predicate, or dependent clause is, and he or she cannot be told what subjects and predicates are if he or she does not know what nouns and verbs are. Although no need is seen for students to explore any theory of grammar in great depth, a need is recognized for them to know the basic nomenclature of the subject and what the functions are of the parts of speech, prepositional and verbal phrases, and the types of clauses. Consequently, portions of the ninth and tenth grade years have been assigned to grammar study. This grammar study will be inter-related with the study of mechanics--punctuation and capitalization--and composition so that grammar will not be taught in isolation as an unusable field of knowledge that everyone thinks students should learn but that no one ever uses.

Literature has been included to broaden students and their imaginations by introducing them to words, worlds, and ideas beyond their experience. It also serves as a vehicle for teaching reading skills. Consequently, works will be chosen which are suited to both reading and literature instruction for ninth and tenth grades. Instruction in ninth grade centers on short stories, drama, and poetry (particularly figurative language). Tenth graders review these areas and study mythology, the Bible,

and the novel.

Through centering on composition, the faculty intends that students become better able to communicate on paper and that they come to understand that writing is communicating. Though many of these students may never write more than an occasional letter, that letter should communicate its writer's meaning. Each student should also be able to write more than that if he or she chooses or needs to. It is the faculty's intention that writing be taught as a process and that practice be plentiful, because they agree with Stephen Judy that "...actual writing practice is the best way to ensure competent writers." (23, p. 20) Composition instruction in ninth grade centers on paragraphing, linking paragraphs together, and narrative writing. Tenth graders cover descriptive, argumentative, and persuasive writing, as well as short non-fiction reports.

Life skills is the last of the four areas chosen to receive emphasis. Practically no mention seems to have been made in the literature of the inclusion of this type of material in the English curriculum. None of the schools visited included study of this sort in their English curriculum either. At Standish-Sterling Central, the visitor was told rather vaguely that they thought some of that was taught by the business department. Pinconning High School, according to English teacher Dionne Gorske, used to offer a course called Practical English but no longer does so because the administration felt too many students took it to earn an easy credit. (16) At Bangor John Glenn, Carol Lankenow said that she is not supposed to teach that sort

of material because it is not a part of the curriculum. She also said she does it anyway because "...the kids need to learn it somewhere." (27) She was, at the time of the interview, part-way through a unit on how to buy a car. Midland Dow does not include any material of this sort in any of its English classes. The Midland Public Schools do, as English Department Chairperson Jan Goodall pointed out to the interviewer, offer an alternative school for students who cannot succeed in the regular educational setting. (14)

It seems odd that none of the authors encountered in a thorough search of the literature pertaining to curriculum, nor any of the schools visited, would address the teaching of such skills in the English classroom, because materials to teach them are readily available. Examples include Levin's Real Life Reading Skills and Klasky's The Amazing Adventures of Harvey Crumbaker: Skills for Living Units I and II. (28, 25, 26) Perhaps the "back to basics" movement has caused schools and teachers to focus more on subject matter more readily identifiable as academic, though this does not explain why writers on curriculum have not addressed the topic.

What this means, though, is that students at these four schools, and at others where such skills are not taught, probably have to learn these skills as people have traditionally learned them--from their parents, from experience and trial and error, or not at all. The problem with this as it relates specifically to Arenac Eastern is that the school district has a large number of parents who are on welfare, parents who are

victims of substance abuse, single-parent homes, and homes where both parents work and are often not home when high school children are. None of these conditions is conductive to the attainment of such skills at home. In addition, responses to a survey by another faculty committee at the school, asking recent graduates which aspects of their high school education had been most beneficial and which aspects needed improvement, indicated that most wished their English classes had taught more of these skills. Thus, a need does seem to exist, and Arenac Eastern's English faculty wishes to address that need.

Placed under this category in ninth grade General English are reading and writing newspaper news stories, writing friendly and business letters, and library/research skills. Tenth graders complete the study of the newspaper, from human interest stories through classified advertisements, and review and extend research skills.

Grammar and mechanics study are not extended into eleventh grade, except as review needed by individuals who have not attained the skills needed to succeed in their composition or life skills work. Rather, an additional literature section is added. The first of these in eleventh grade covers such non-fiction genres as biography and essay, plus reviews short stories, drama, and poetry. These forms are all studied in a thematic unit, similar to the elective courses offered in some schools, on the family. At the end of this part of eleventh grade General English, students should have attained the skills needed for the study of literature in survey units, by literary periods, or by

thematic units, with the purpose of such study no longer the attainment of skills but of knowledge about literature and of broadening the student's imagination.

The second area of concentration is a brief survey of American literature. The faculty has included this because they feel that all students, general as well as college bound, should have some familiarity with their cultural background. They may not choose to read Poe or Hemingway for pleasure, but they should at least know who these authors are and what their places are in American literature and history.

Composition work for eleventh grade General English covers comparison skills; expository writing; and reviews of movies, television shows, and books.

The life skills area of concentration covers letters of application, resumes, letters of reference, filling out insurance and other forms, and simulated job interviews. These activities have been included here because it is expected that juniors be starting to feel the pressure of decisions relating to life after graduation, and covering them in eleventh grade allows time for review in twelfth grade before graduation.

In twelfth grade General English, the four major areas of concentration are literature, media study, composition, and life skills.

Their literature study consists of two thematic units, one on death and dying (including literature relating to teen suicide) and one on science fiction. Again, these units are similar to electives offered in other schools and are on topics which

seem popular with students becoming weary of school and concentrating more on their upcoming graduation than on anything else.

The media study unit covers television, movies, radio, magazines, and advertising, and will study critical viewing, listening, and reading--with the major emphasis placed on critical use of the media. Students are expected to apply the concepts gained in their literature study to television shows and movies. They also will learn to recognize advertising techniques and ploys. Media study has been included in this English curriculum because, as Ruth points out, studies show that students spend more time in front of the television than in the classroom and consequently derive much of their information about the world from television. She also says that television conveys values, presents role models, and persuades viewers to buy products--all of which make critical viewing skills important. (36) Many of the same types of characters, situations, and influences are found in movies, and many of the same advertising techniques are used in radio and magazine advertising, so all of these types of media are covered in this unit.

Twelfth grade composition work focuses on creative writing, but also includes application of the various types of writing learned in previous years to the study of literature and the media.

The life skills unit reviews and extends the skills covered in eleventh grade--filling out forms, job interviews, et cetera--and also consists partially of some types of consumer education--guarantees, warranties, the rights and responsibili-

ties of consumers, letters of inquiry and complaint, et cetera. Again, these activities are concentrated near the end of the student's high school careers because their impending graduation should make them more concerned about this type of knowledge.

Two aspects of communication skills education which are noticeably absent from this curriculum are speaking and listening. Though it is expected that English teachers will provide opportunities for students to develop their oral and aural communications skills, speech is a separate department at Arenac Eastern. All students are required to pass one year of speech class before graduation (and a second year of speech is offered), and consequently, primary responsibility for developing speaking and listening skills is allotted to the speech department.

As an ending note to this description of the General English curriculum, the faculty wishes to stress that it is aware of the current mastery curriculum movement and the apparent benefits of a mastery curriculum. The idea of attempting to institute a mastery curriculum in English was discussed but rejected for two reasons. First, administrative and board approval would have to be obtained, not only for the new curriculum, but for the mastery concept as well, which would entail educating board members and parents about the mastery concept (a project which could take years), prolonging the length of time before the new curriculum could go into effect. Second, no structure for the support of a mastery curriculum exists in the school, and the faculty had doubts about the ability of one department to carry out a true mastery curricu-

lum when the rest of the school was locked into the traditional system of assigning grades for levels of achievement, with credit earned for a semester by earning passing grades.

CHAPTER V

Goals and Objectives

The curriculum detailed in Chapter IV yields the goals and objectives listed below:

Ninth Grade General English

Grammar and Mechanics

Goals:

To build in students a vocabulary for use in the study of mechanics and composition

To develop an awareness of the basic sentence structure of the English language

To develop punctuation and capitalization skills such that when students write, they may be understood

Objectives:

By the end of ninth grade, the students will be able to:

define the parts of speech

determine by its usage in a sentence which part of speech a word is

define the parts of the sentence (subject, predicate, direct object, predicate nominative or adjective)

identify the parts of given sentences

define proper, plural, and possessive nouns

identify proper, plural, and possessive nouns

make nouns plural and possessive

define the verb tenses

identify verbs as past, present, or future tense

make verbs past, present, and future tense

convert adjectives to adverbs

identify prepositional phrases

make subjects and predicates agree

make pronouns agree with their antecedents

identify sentence fragments lacking in subjects and/or verbs

correct such sentence fragment errors in their own writing

identify run-on sentences

correct run-on sentences in their own writing

use end marks correctly

use capital letters correctly

use commas correctly in dates, addresses, and series; after nouns of direct address; around appositives; after introductory words; in sentences containing two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction; and in direct quotations

identify direct and indirect quotations

correctly punctuate direct quotations

Literature and Reading

Goals:

To develop and improve reading comprehension

To encourage and develop reading for pleasure

To develop an awareness of literature as an art

To broaden the experiences of students through literature

To develop awareness of the short story, drama, and poetry as literary forms

Objectives:

By the end of ninth grade, the students will be able to:

identify or infer the main idea of a selection

identify or infer the sequence of events in a selection

identify or infer details that support main ideas

identify or infer cause/effect relationships in a selection

identify or infer similarities and differences within a selection

use foreboding and foreshadowing to predict a selection's outcome

use context clues to determine the probable definition of an unfamiliar word

identify word relationships

draw conclusions from information given

determine an author's purpose

distinguish between fact and opinion

identify the point of view from which a selection is told

when given the opportunity, read for pleasure or information (aside from schoolwork), both at home and at school

define the short story and its elements: character (protagonist, antagonist, et cetera), setting, conflict and its types, the plot and its parts, point of view, viewpoint, mood, tone (comedy, tragedy, irony, et cetera), theme

identify the above elements in short stories

when presented with a poem, identify it as such

define the common types of figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, symbol)

identify in poems the common types of figurative language

render figurative language into literal language, thereby demonstrating comprehension

define the more common devices of sound (rhyme, alliteration, repetition, onomatopoeia)

identify in poems the more common devices of sound

recognize blank verse and free verse as poetry

demonstrate comprehension of the poems presented by being able to relate in prose, either orally or in writing, what the poems says

define terms common to drama but not to other literary forms (stage direction, prop, et cetera)

demonstrate comprehension of a play read in class by telling orally or in writing what has happened

apply to other literary works the knowledge of terms acquired in the study of the three genres given here (so that a student may recognize a symbol in a play, for example, as well as a poem)

Composition

Goals:

To develop in students an awareness that writing is communicating

To develop in students the ability to communicate their thoughts in writing

Objectives:

By the end of ninth grade, the students will be able to:

write a paragraph containing a topic sentence

make transitions from one paragraph to another

write a paper of two or more paragraphs that demonstrates a logical sequence of thought

compose a narrative in which the events are arranged in chronological order, with an introduction and conclusion

Life Skills

Goals:

To develop in students those language skills they need or may want to use in everyday adult life

To develop the ability to read the newspaper

To enable students to find information

To enable students to use the library

Objectives:

By the end of ninth grade, students will be able to:

define the term "news story"

identify a news story in a newspaper

write a news story with a summary lead and in inverse pyramid order

write a headline for a news story

use the subject, title, and author cards in a library card catalog

locate a given book on the shelves of a library

identify and give the major uses of various sorts of reference works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, indexes, et cetera)

use various sorts of references to locate information

follow oral and written directions

outline a selection (such as a chapter in a text)

outline information in a logical order

write a friendly letter

write a business letter

Tenth Grade General English

Grammar and Mechanics

Goals:

To build in students a vocabulary for use in the study of mechanics and composition

To develop an awareness of the basic sentence structure of the English language

To develop punctuation and capitalization skills such that when students write, they may be understood

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth grade, students will be able, at the end of tenth grade, to:

define independent clauses

identify independent clauses

define dependent clauses

identify dependent clauses

define essential and non-essential dependent clauses

identify essential and non-essential clauses

define verbal phrases

identify the three types of verbal phrase - gerundive, infinitival, and participial

identify sentence fragments composed of dependent clauses or verbal phrases written as complete sentences

correct in their own writing sentence fragments composed of dependent clauses or verbal phrases

correctly punctuate quotations within quotations

use commas to set off introductory verbal phrases, introductory dependent clauses, and non-essential dependent clauses

use semi-colons correctly

use colons correctly

use dashes correctly

use parentheses correctly

Literature and Reading

Goals:

To develop and improve reading comprehension

To encourage and develop reading for pleasure

To develop an awareness of literature as an art

To broaden the experiences of students through literature

To develop an awareness of the influences of the Bible and of Greco-Roman mythology on Western literature

To introduce the various types of prose fiction

To review and further the literary skills introduced in ninth grade General English

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth grade, students will be able, at the end of tenth grade, to:

define rhyming verse, blank verse, and free verse

identify the type of verse used in a poem

define assonance and consonance

identify assonance and consonance when they occur in poetry

define the types of prose fiction (short story, novella, prose allegory, prose romance, novel)

identify a prose fiction work of more than 100 pages as being a prose allegory, prose romance, or novel

recognize major figures from Greco-Roman mythology (Hercules, Theseus, Oedipus, et cetera)

demonstrate comprehension of major themes in Greco-Roman mythology

recognize major figures from the Bible (Adam and Eve, Moses, et cetera)

demonstrate comprehension of major themes in the Bible

demonstrate comprehension of literary allusions to mythological and biblical themes and figures

Composition

Goals:

To develop in students an awareness that writing is communicating

To develop in students the ability to communicate their thoughts in writing

To make students aware of the different types of writing that fit different situations and to build skills appropriate to those types and situations (for example, descriptive writing and descriptive skills, persuasive writing and persuasive skills, et cetera)

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth grade, students will be able, at the end of tenth grade, to:

write a descriptive composition

write an argumentative composition

write a persuasive composition

write a brief non-fiction report

Life Skills

Goals:

To develop in students those language skills they need or may want to use in everyday adult life

To become familiar with the parts of a newspaper

To encourage the use and reading of the newspaper

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth grade, students will be able, by the end of tenth grade, to:

define the term "human interest story"

identify a human interest story in a newspaper

write a human interest story

define the term "editorial"

find and identify editorials in newspapers

write an editorial

define the term "by-line column"

find a by-line column in a newspaper

define the term "advice column"

find an advice column in a newspaper

define the term "classified advertisement"

find and identify the classified advertisements in a newspaper

demonstrate familiarity with the various types of classified advertisements

compose a classified advertisement for some purpose of their own

find sections in a newspaper that give schedules of television shows, movies, and upcoming social events

use such schedules to determine real or hypothetical social activities

define the terms "movie and book reviews"

identify movie and book reviews in a newspaper

Eleventh Grade General English

Literature and Reading

Goals:

To develop and improve reading comprehension

To encourage and develop reading for pleasure

To broaden the experiences of students through literature

To develop awareness of such non-fiction forms as autobiographies, biographies, essays, letters, and reviews as literature

To explore through literature problems and concerns of family life

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth and tenth grades, students will be able, by the end of eleventh grade, to:

define autobiography and biography

identify autobiographical and biographical writing

define "essay" as it pertains to non-fiction writing

identify essays when encountered

demonstrate comprehension of the structure of an essay

become familiar with the concepts of letters and reviews as literature

American Literature

Goals:

To familiarize students with their cultural background

To acquaint students with the writing of great American authors

Objectives:

By the end of eleventh grade, students will be able to:

identify a certain number (decided upon by the instructor as time allows) of American authors and their works, for example, Edgar Allen Poe and "The Pit and the Pendulum," Robert Frost and "The Road Not Taken," et cetera

demonstrate familiarity with some of the works by these authors

demonstrate familiarity with the impact of some literary works on American society (for example, Rachel Carson's Silent Spring or The Jungle by Upton Sinclair)

Composition

Goals:

To develop in students the ability to communicate their thoughts in writing

To make students aware of the different types of writing that fit different situations and to build skills appropriate to those types and situations

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth and tenth grades, students will be able at the end of the eleventh grade, to:

write a comparison/contrast composition

write an expository composition explaining a position or a process

write reviews of movies, books, and television shows

Life Skills

Goals:

To develop in students those language skills they need or may want to use in everyday adult life

To provide students with the language skills they need to find jobs

Objectives:

By the end of eleventh grade, students will be able to:

write a letter of application for a job

compose a resume

obtain letters of reference

write letters of reference for others

complete, with no errors, job application forms and insurance forms

complete--with attention to body language, politeness, et cetera--a simulated job interview

Twelfth Grade General English

Literature

Goals:

To develop and improve reading comprehension

To encourage and develop reading for pleasure

To broaden the experiences of students through literature

To identify characteristics that make science fiction a distinct style of prose fiction

To explore through literature personal and societal attitudes toward death and dying

To explore through literature the subject of teen suicide

Objectives:

In addition to those skills attained in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, students will be able, by the end of twelfth grade, to:

define science fiction

identify aspects of science fiction that make it distinct from other styles of prose fiction

become cognizant of personal attitudes toward death and dying through the study of literature

identify through the study of literature pressures and influences that result in teen suicide

Media

Goals:

To view critically television and movies

To determine ways in which television and movies convey values and present role models

To read critically material in magazines

To apply propaganda techniques to advertising and detect advertising ploys

Objectives:

At the end of twelfth grade, students will be able to:

critically assess in written reviews the quality of writing in a movie or television show

assess how close a parallel of real life events in television shows are

identify propaganda techniques used in advertising

identify advertising ploys and gimmicks

identify role models created by television or movies

create, through the use of videotape machines, original television shows and movies

Composition

Goals:

To apply the various types of compositions to writing about literature, television shows, and movies

To use figurative language and vivid modifiers in original writing

To create original worlds and ideas

To imagine

Objectives:

By the end of twelfth grade, students will be able to:

apply the various types of compositions to writing about literature, television shows, and movies (for example, a comparison of Rambo and a Clint Eastwood character, a description of J. R. Ewing's personality, et cetera)

write original short stories with original figurative language and vivid modifiers

write original poems, both rhymed and in free verse

create original ideas through imaginative writing

write and illustrate a children's book, then read it to an elementary classroom

Life Skills

Goals:

To review the skills involved in attaining a job

To develop in students comprehension of guarantees and warranties - and of their types

To develop in students a knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of consumers

To attain a knowledge of the avenues of action available to a consumer in the event of the purchase of a defective product or service

To write letters of inquiry and complaint

Objectives:

In addition to the skills attained in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, students will be able, by the end of twelfth grade, to:

identify the specific types of protection offered a consumer by a warranty or guarantee

demonstrate knowledge of the various rights and responsibilities of a consumer

demonstrate knowledge of the steps a consumer can take in the event of the purchase of a defective product or service

write letters of inquiry concerning the failure of an ordered product to arrive, the return of a defective product under warranty, an incorrect bill, et cetera

write effective letters of complaint about the purchase of a defective product or service, the receipt of an inaccurate bill, et cetera, requesting or demanding that the company live up to its responsibility and rectify the problem

Chapter VI

Suggestions for Research and Summary

As pointed out in Chapters I and III of this paper, differing curricula do exist for differing groups of high school students. Sometimes differing sets of courses are drawn up for students of differing levels of ability. Another reason, also pointed out in Chapter I, is the different types of goals students may have set for themselves, so that college bound students do not take the same classes as non-college bound students. Very little research appears to have been done, however, into the types of courses and course content appropriate to the differing needs and goals of these two groups, at least insofar as English is concerned.

Of the two groups, the college bound students probably fare better under these conditions, for their teachers, administrators, and their teachers' and administrators' college professors all know what sorts of material they studied and needed for success in college. Whether or not any of these people know what sorts of English course material non-college bound students need is highly questionable, since none of them ended up being non-college bound. They all have finished college at one time or another.

Perhaps the most obvious solution to this problem is to simply ask terminal high school students several years after graduation what sorts of communications skills work have proved most beneficial to them and what sorts of material they would recommend be taught in high school English classes. A survey asking these questions could be prepared and given to graduates from a variety

of high schools serving a variety of populations (rural, suburban, urban, poor, middle class, et cetera)

Another possibility is to ask employers what sorts of language skills they require or would like to see in holders of jobs that require no formal education after high school, though a good share of the language skills graduates would need probably would not be work-related.

Beyond that, research should be done to determine at what grade level a certain type of work is most appropriate. If surveys show that students should be taught how to fill out job applications or should go through a simulated job interview process, at what age and/or grade level is that type of work most appropriate? Should it be covered in ninth grade or saved till twelfth? If grammar or the media should be studied, when and how much?

Whatever research is conducted in the future, however, the curriculum contained in this paper cannot yet benefit from it. This curriculum has been constructed to meet a need identified by the English teachers at Arenac Eastern High School. That need is for an English curriculum for non-college bound students at the school. A review of the literature, visits to four other high schools, and meetings of Arenac Eastern's English faculty yielded many ideas, some of which were discarded and others of which were molded into the curriculum detailed in Chapter IV. Under this curriculum, communications skills work in each grade level is centered around four major areas of study. In ninth and tenth grades, these are grammar and mechanics, literature and reading,

composition, and life skills. In eleventh grade, these are literature and reading, American Literature, composition, and life skills. Twelfth graders will study literature, the media, composition, and life skills. A set of goals and objectives was drawn up for each area of study in each grade level.

Future research does need to be done, though, to determine just what sorts of material truly are appropriate to such a curriculum and to what grade levels. In the absence of such research, Arenac Eastern's English faculty hopes they will meet the needs of their students with the curriculum prepared here, for as John Maxwell has said, "Eighty per cent of what the public expects as fundamental learning after twelve years of schooling is the central subject matter of the English program." (29, p. 5)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Algeo, John, "A Contemporary View of What Should Be Taught," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 12-17.

2. Applebee, Arthur M., "Literature," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 3, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 405-412.

3. Bergman, Floyd L. The English Teacher's Activities Handbook (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1976).

4. "Curriculum," Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1961), p. 204.

5. Dittmer, Allan E., "The English Curriculum: Design/Programs/Trends," English Journal, April, 1974, pp. 72-74.

6. Early, Margaret, "Important Research in Reading and Writing," Curriculum Handbook, ed. Louis Rubin (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977), pp. 60-67.

7. Emig, Janet, "Writing, Composition, and Rhetoric," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 4, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 2021-2036.

8. Evans, William, and Jerry L. Walker. New Trends in the Teaching of English in Secondary Schools (Chicago: Rand, McNally, & Co., 1966).

9. Farrell, Edmund J., "Traditional and Contemporary Literature in Secondary Schools," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 25-30.

10. Farrell, Edmund J., and Charles Davis, "Pop Culture Has an Important Place in the English Classroom," English Journal, April, 1981, pp. 8-12.

11. Flood, James, and Diane Lapp, "The Reading/Language Arts Curriculum of Secondary Schools: What Has Been and What Might Be," English Education, May, 1985, pp. 79-80.

12. Flore, Michael, instructor of English at Arenac Eastern High School, Twining, Mich., in numerous meetings and discussions held between January and April, 1986.

13. Glatthorn, Allan A. A Guide for Developing an English Curriculum for the Eighties (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980).

14. Goodall, Jan, English Dept. Chairperson at Midland Dow High School, Midland, Mich., in personal interview, March 25, 1986.

15. Goodman, Yetta M., "Language and the English Curriculum," Education in the '80's - English, ed. R. Baird Shuman (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1981), pp. 30-35.

16. Gorske, Dionne, instructor of English at Pinconning High School, Pinconning, Mich., in personal interview, March 25, 1986.

17. Harder, Joan, instructor of English at Standish-Sterling Central High School, Standish, Mich., in personal interview, March 11, 1986.

18. Hipple, Theodore W., "Literature Study in the '80's: A look at the possibilities," Education in the '80's - English, ed. R. Baird Shuman (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1981), pp. 20-29.

19. Hunter, Barbara, instructor of English at Arenac Eastern High School, Twining, Mich., in numerous meetings and discussions held between January and April, 1986.

20. Jensen, Julie M., "English Language Education," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 2, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 563-575.

21. Johnson, Robert Spencer, "The English Curriculum in Middle Schools, Junior Highs - The Components," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 41-46.

22. Judy, Stephen N. Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1974).

23. Judy, Stephen N., "Teaching Composition: What Can Administrators Do to Improve It?" NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 18-24.

24. Kean, John M., "Listening," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 3, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 1102-1105.

25. Klasky, Charles. The Amazing Adventures of Harvey Crumbaker: Skills for Living, Unit I (Carson, Cal.: Lakeshore Curriculum Materials Co., 1978).

26. Klasky, Charles. The Amazing Adventures of Harvey Crumbaker: Skills for Living, Unit II (Carson, Cal.: Lakeshore Curriculum Materials Co., 1978).

27. Lankenow, Carol, instructor of English at Bangor John Glenn High School, Bay City, Mich., in personal interview, March 25, 1986.

28. Levin, Beatrice Jackson. Real Life Reading Skills (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1977).

29. Maxwell, John, "A Five-Point Program to Improve English Programs," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 1-5.

30. Michigan Dep't. of Education. Minimal Performance Objectives in Communications Skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening (Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State Board of Education, 1980).

31. Milner, Joseph O., "Moral Development in the English Curriculum," NASSP Bulletin, Dec., 1980, pp. 92-97.

32. Pienziozek, Carol, English Dep't. Chairperson at Standish-Sterling Central High School, Standish, Mich., in personal interview, March 11, 1986.

33. Price, Larry, English Dep't. Chairperson at Pinconning High School, Pinconning, Mich., in personal interview, March 25, 1986.

34. Purves, Alan C., "Accountability and Evaluation in Secondary School English," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 37-40.

35. Romano, Tom, "Driving Cars, Thievery, and Basic Skills," English Journal, Nov., 1981, pp. 68-70.

36. Ruth, Deborah Dashow, "Expanded English: Media Study as a Basic Skill," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 31-36.

37. Schapiro, Jeri. The Jobs Book: How to Find and Keep a Job (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1976).

38. Shadlow, Linda, "Every Teacher as a Writing Teacher: A Definition of Terms," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 47-53.

39. Short, Edmund C., "Curriculum Development and Organization," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 1, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 405-412.

40. Shubert, William H., "Curriculum Research," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 1, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 420-431.

41. Stotsky, Sandra L., "Sentence Combining as a Curricular Activity: Its Effect on Written Language Development and Reading Comprehension," Research in the Teaching of English, Spring, 1975, pp. 30-71.

42. Strong, William, "New Criteria for Curriculum Guides," English Journal, Dec., 1972, pp. 1342-1349.

43. Swift, Jonathan, "The Organization, Management of English Departments," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 54-61.

44. Tanner, Daniel, "Curriculum History," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, vol. 1, ed. Harold E. Mitzel (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 412-420.

45. Trump, J. Floyd, and Delmas F. Miller. Secondary School Curriculum Improvement (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1973), pp. 62-83.

46. Wilson, Velez H., "Nurturing Language Diversity in the School," NASSP Bulletin, April, 1981, pp. 6-11.

47. Wolfe, Denny T., "Thinking as a Language Art," The High School Journal, Feb., 1978, pp. 247-253.

GENERAL ENGLISH CURRICULUM

FOR ARENAC EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL

GENERAL ENGLISH 9

- Grammar and Mechanics
- Literature and Reading
- Composition
- Life Skills

GENERAL ENGLISH 10

- Grammar and Mechanics
- Literature and Reading
- Composition
- Life Skills

GENERAL ENGLISH 11

- Literature and Reading
- American Literature
- Composition
- Life Skills

GENERAL ENGLISH 12

- Literature
- Media
- Composition
- Life Skills